

The Library Assistant:

The Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians.

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

Annual Meeting	85
Report of Carnegie U.K. Trust	88
More Innocents Abroad. By a member of the A.A.L.	90
The Printing Press. By M. L. Hodges	97
The Divisions—	
Liverpool and District	103
Midland	104

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS.

In place of the ordinary monthly meeting in London, a joint excursion to Worthing with the London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association has been arranged for May 28th. Fare 7s. 6d. return. The programme is as follows:—

9.45 a.m. Meet at Booking Office.

10.5 a.m. Train leaves Victoria.

11.53 a.m. Arrives Worthing.

12.10 p.m. Lunch at Mitchell's Restaurant, Worthing.—

Cost, 2s. 6d.

4.0 p.m. Motor Drive. By kind invitation of Alderman Mrs. Chapman, Chairman of the Libraries Committee.

During the afternoon a paper will be given on "The Difficulties of a Division." The train leaves Worthing for London at 6.47 p.m.

Members intending to be present should communicate with Mr. W. Benson Thorne, Bromley Library, Brunswick Road, Poplar, E.14, on or before May 14th, in order to facilitate arrangements with the Railway Company and with the South Coast Division.

Annual Meeting.—The Annual Meeting will take place at Woolwich Central Library, at 7.30 p.m., on Wednesday, 18th June, through the kind offices of Mr. Philip C. Bursill, F.L.A., Borough Librarian. In connection with this meeting arrangements have been made to visit one of the Steamers of the Commonwealth Government Line, at King George V. Dock, North Woolwich, in the afternoon. Further details will appear in the June number of the Journal.

Officers and Council, 1924-1925.—Nominations are invited for Officers and Council for 1924-1925, and should be sent to the

Honorary Secretary (Mr. Gurner P. Jones, B.A.), Public Library, Bancroft Road, E.1, not later than Tuesday, 13th May.

The officers to be elected are: a President (who must be a Provincial member), a Vice-President (who must be a London member), Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Editor, and Honorary Secretary.

Nominations for the Council are required for ten London members and for five Provincial members. It should be remembered that the London area now embraces all districts within a fifteen miles radius from Charing Cross.

Any member desiring to submit a notice of motion, or any other matter, for the consideration of the Annual General Meeting, should forward notice of same to the Honorary Secretary (Mr. Gurner P. Jones), Public Library, Bancroft Road, E.1, not later than Tuesday, 13th May.

Next Council Meeting.—The next meeting of the Council will be held at the Public Library, Buckingham Palace Road, Westminster, S.W.1, on Wednesday, 14th May, at 3.30 p.m.

To the Fellows, Members, and Associates of the Association.—You will see from this month's note on the Work of the Council that Mr. H. A. Sharp, who has occupied the position of Hon. Editor of our Journal for nine years with conspicuous success, has definitely decided to resign the editorship. I say "definitely," because he asked to be relieved of his duties once if not twice before; but so insistent and so unanimous were the Council in their desire for his continuance in office, that he felt compelled to withdraw his resignation.

Our Association has been particularly fortunate in its editors, and Mr. Sharp has occupied the editorial chair in a manner worthy of his predecessors—nothing more need be said!

Several members of the Association have expressed their desire that Mr. Sharp's resignation of office should be the occasion of some tangible mark of esteem, and I may say affection, in which he is held by the Association as a whole and by every individual member who is acquainted with him. I have, accordingly, much pleasure in stating that it has been decided to make a presentation to Mr. Sharp at, if possible, the Annual Meeting; and subscriptions for that object, whether large or small, may be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. R. Cooper, F.L.A., Battersea Public Library, S.W.11, before May 31st.

WALTER H. PARKER, President.

The Work of the Council.—The last meeting of the Council, which was held at the National Library for the Blind, on Wednesday, 16th April, resulted in the accomplishment of little more than a preliminary survey of the ground to be covered at the May Meeting, when the Divisional delegates will be present.

Arising from the report of the Finance Committee there was a lengthy discussion on the question of a reduction of subscriptions. This question will certainly be raised again next month, and it seems that the point to be decided is whether subscriptions should be reduced a trifle, or whether the Journal should be enlarged. Inasmuch as the Journal represents the sole connecting link between many provincial assistants and the association there is need for careful thought before a decision is arrived at on this point. Even if a reduction is possible, it will be a trifling one, because, as the Treasurer pointed out, although an apparently substantial balance is carried forward on the balance sheet, that balance is the sole means of support for the Association until next year's subscriptions begin to arrive—a period of quite three months.

Nothing of outstanding interest was reported by the Press and Publications Committee, except that they seem to be considering the possibility of increasing the value of the journal as an advertising medium. In the discussion on this Committee's report, the Honorary Editor intimated that he had decided to resign his office at the Annual Meeting. This decision was met with unanimous disapproval from the Council, but Mr. Sharp was adamant, and it seems that the Association is to have a new occupant of the editorial chair.

Another appreciable list of new members, and a very encouraging report from Mr. Thorne on the sale of the A.A.L. Series terminated the evening's business.

EDITORIALS.

The Holland Excursion.—We are happy to say that the Excursion to Holland was a brilliant success in every way. Forty-five people attended from all parts of the country, the weather was ideal, and the arrangements in Holland were carried out perfectly by the Dutch Committee. Thanks are specially due to Dr. Sevensma, who took over the whole of the financial burden from the time when the party reached Dutch soil until they left it. On another page we give some account of the Excursion.

Examinations.—We wish all candidates at the forthcoming examinations every success, presuming of course that they have followed diligently a preparatory course of study. Be careful to read your questions carefully and to check each answer to see that the whole of the question—which is often in two parts—has been answered. Remember too that certain questions are compulsory.

Librarians and Broadcasting.—Whether for good or ill, it is interesting to see that a number of librarians have been following Mr. Benson Thorne's example in using the microphone as a

medium for linking up books and readers. Within a week or so we have had Mr. Riddle discoursing at Bournemouth on the history of that town. At Birmingham Mr. Powell has been talking on the great Shakespeare collection under his charge and on the work of the Libraries, Mr. W. Beeston has talked to the "teens" on "Books to Read," and Mr. H. P. Marshall, of Smethwick, on "The Life and History of Byron."

An Important Annual.—We have received a copy of the Tenth Annual Report of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, covering the year 1923, and find in it much interesting information regarding the library position as seen through the eyes of the Trustees. From it we learn that the two important problems that prompted the drawing up of the recent valuable "Report on the Public Library System of Great Britain and Ireland" were the desirability of some form of co-ordination between small town libraries and county systems, and to determine the true function of the Public Library in the sphere of adult education.

Arising out of these two problems, the President of the Board of Education proposed that they should form part of the terms of reference of the newly-constituted Adult Education Committee, which would sit for two years as from November, 1923, of which the Trust's Secretary is a member.

Great prominence is given in the Report to the position of the Rural Library movement. During the year grants have been made to Derbyshire, Worcestershire, Berkshire, Durham, Morayshire, Roxburghshire, and East Lothian. Of these schemes there are now sixty in operation, and it is important to remember that the offer of a grant remains open only till the end of 1925.

With reference to the question of co-operation between the rural and the urban libraries the Report says that "it is obvious that the circulating box-system does not give the facilities which are provided by a stationary library of the borough type. The choice of books at any one moment is limited; it provides no local reference library and no reading room. At the same time the plain fact is that the system does supply the kind of book which is most required—namely, general current literature, and it is precisely this kind of literature which the impoverished library in the small borough finds it so difficult to provide. Hence the growing complaint in the smaller town that the rural reader is getting a better supply at a much cheaper rate, and the widespread tendency to seek for some form of collaboration. Perhaps the most natural basis of this collaboration is that the borough should, out of the sum raised for library purposes, pay annually to the County Library such an amount as would be raised if the County Library rate were imposed, receiving in return a proportionate supply of books on loan."

We are glad to see that the Trust has continued its grant of £1,000 to the Central Library of Students. The opinion is expressed that the Central Library service should issue only to libraries, urban and rural, not to individuals (except in areas where no Public Library system exists) and further, that some basis of contribution for service rendered should as soon as possible be devised, and that it would not be unreasonable to ask in due course for some State assistance.

It is to be hoped that in drawing up a system of "charges" care will be taken to keep them within such limits as will not prevent students of slender means from making use of the Central Library. As the Report says, "any charge superimposed upon that of postage would probably be a serious difficulty to poor students, some of whom find the postage a sufficient burden."

The National Library for the Blind, which is doing such a fine work, has received £15,000 towards the cost of extending the premises of the Library.

The London School of Librarianship is just at the end of its experimental period of five years, but as the University authorities are at present unable to shoulder the whole financial burden of its upkeep, the Trust has agreed to make a final contribution in the form of a five-year grant on a descending scale calculated so as to vanish at the end of the session 1928-29. "At the end of that period, it will be for the University Authorities, in their sole discretion to maintain or close the school."

There is an important appendix of thirty pages based upon reports submitted by County Librarians to the Trustees, in which the rural situation is fully reviewed. In England, Scotland and Wales there are fifty-three counties with county libraries; twenty-two others are considering the adoption of the Public Libraries Acts.

We are glad to see that the Report lays bare what to our minds has for too long been the weak spot in the County Library movement, viz., the staff shortage. It is so important that we print the whole of the Report's statement below.

"The question thus raised of the balance of duties in the County Librarian's work is an important one. It is difficult, unless the staff of the County Library is reinforced to an extent which would at present be considered impracticable, for the County Librarian to make the best adjustment of his time to the claims of office and of "field" work. Where he or she has no senior assistant, the work at the County Repository must suffer if the County Librarian travels in the county as much as would in better circumstances be desirable and *vice versa*. For any of the larger libraries, the present system of staffing (based on the minimum stipulated by the Trustees) can be roughly summed up as 'one

good librarian (well paid as such), and a minimum clerical and manual staff,' although fortunately some of the richer counties are able to exceed the minimum. This system is undoubtedly the best, where finance will not allow of a more liberal provision, and on the whole it appears to work very well; but it does mean that the librarian is tied, and necessarily tied, to his office to a greater extent than is desirable, and a plea may, therefore, here be entered for the provision, where the work and finances justify it, of a capable senior assistant at the repository in order to liberate the librarian for the field without causing neglect of the important work of headquarters administration. This is possibly the chief lesson to be learned from the quality of the County Librarians' reports for 1923, and the point has been specifically raised by some of the counties."

The Appendix is full of interesting and important matter, but space forbids us to dwell on it further. Those of our readers who have access to the Report will do well to spend an hour in perusing its contents.

MORE INNOCENTS ABROAD.

By A MEMBER OF THE A.A.L.

The undoubted success of the Excursion to Holland must be ascribed to the remarkable organisation of our friends on the Committee of Dutch Librarians, added to the careful work in the same direction by the English Committee. Never before I should think, has so large a programme been carried through without a single hitch. Even the weather seems to have been under their control, for it could not have been kinder to us or more suited to the purpose.

The majority of the party met at Liverpool Street soon after 8 p.m., and at 8.30 we duly steamed from the station, comfortably seated in our reserved carriages. Harwich was reached at 10 o'clock, where we met some of our colleagues from the Midlands, and then we found the S.S. "Roulers" awaiting us. After claiming the reserved cabins, most of the party returned to deck and watched our departure from the shores of England. It was a beautiful night, the moon being full, and the sea smooth. The keen air drove us below soon after midnight and the opportunity of a few hours rest and sleep was seized by many. At 5.30 we were awakened by the steward's knock, and after a wash and dress, reassembled on deck, in time to see a glorious red sun rising over the flat land of Holland. Our destination was in sight and very soon we reached The Hook. A perfunctory examination at the Customs was followed by a more scrupulous inspection of the precious Passports which some of us were carrying for the first

time in our lives. This ordeal passed, we hastened to the platform where our train awaited, with carriages duly reserved.

Very soon we were off, and had our first opportunity of seeing the new country we had thought and talked so much about. Travelling *via* Schiedam, the train brought us to The Hague at 8.10, and here we had the pleasure of meeting our Dutch colleagues, Misses Gebhard, Snouck-Hurgronje, and Mr. Douma. They escorted us to the hotel, close to the station and many rejoiced to find breakfast was already set. This, our first meal together, was the means of making us better acquainted with our fellow travellers. By 10 o'clock we were prepared to make an energetic move, so splitting into two parties we started for the Palace of Peace. One party travelled by tram, and the other made the excursion on foot, passing through the town, past the Royal Palace and through a well-wooded park. The Peace Palace, a very large building, is surrounded by an unusually high iron railing and as carefully guarded from intruders as any fortification. Indeed, the same principles apply: for those of us who carried cameras were obliged to surrender them temporarily before an admittance was granted. Once inside we were really surprised at the stateliness and beauty of the decorations. A noble marble staircase, modelled after the well-known one at the Royal Opera House, Paris, but slightly smaller, met the eye. On the middle landing, surrounded by stained glass windows, was a bust of the founder, the late Mr. Andrew Carnegie. We were welcomed by our friend Dr. ter Meulen, the Librarian, and ushered into one of the larger rooms under his charge. A short address on the objects and work of the Palace and its Library, was followed by an exhibition of specimens of catalogues and indexes used. Then a survey of the numerous apartments of the Palace was made, under the direction of a guide with a most remarkable gift of English idiom.

As an example of the "international" character of the Palace of Peace, we were informed that one of the finest rooms we inspected was furnished by various nations, Turkey supplying the carpet, Brazil the woodwork, Spain the silver inkstands, and so on. Finally, we were honoured by an invitation to lunch within the Palace walls, an unexpected treat which all appreciated. The meal over, we soon had to move, for there remained much else to do in the day's programme. A short stop, however, was first called, to permit of the party being photographed. Owing to the act being prohibited within the Palace precincts, we were grouped outside the gate. This ordeal over we proceeded to walk through the city to the Public Library. We were received here by the Director, Dr. H. E. Greve, who in a few words welcomed the party to the new building. A tour through the various departments under the guidance of members of the Library staff proved

very interesting. Our cicerones added to their kindness by providing refreshments before our departure. But our photographers had turned up again and yet another picture had to be taken, with the Library as a background. A short walk, then tramcars were mounted and we were conveyed to Scheveningen, Holland's favourite seaside resort. Most of the public buildings, hotels and shops were closed, for the season does not commence until some weeks later. We passed through to the station, when our guides took the necessary tickets back to The Hague. Dutch railways have a very good custom of permitting a journey to be broken and then resumed with the same ticket, and we were to take advantage of this fact, by derailing at Duin en Dal. This is a favourite holiday resort for the inhabitants of The Hague, and accommodation is provided for large parties. A capital tea was offered us in the name of the Dutch Association, represented by our friends Dr. Svensma and Miss Gebhard, of Amsterdam, and Miss Muhlenfeld, of Hilversum. Returning to the station we resumed our journey to The Hague and reached the Terminus Hotel, where we were to dine. Later on we again crossed to the station and took train to Amsterdam, arriving about 10 o'clock. More friends met us here and quickly conveyed us to the hotel which was to be our home for three nights. A cordial welcome from the genial host and then to bed, tired and happy.

On Saturday morning we discovered our host had duly acknowledged our presence by the display of a large red ensign alongside the Dutch national flag. He proved to be a cultured and interesting man, Secretary of the local Chamber of Commerce and very keen on Amsterdam obtaining proper appreciation by visitors. Our first trip was fixed for the Public Library, which we found in a handsome building remodelled from two palatial residences alongside a canal. We were very graciously received by the Chairman, who gave an interesting address of welcome, followed by a brief technical speech from the Librarian, Dr. Sevensma, our Honorary Treasurer. Under the guidance of the several members of the staff, all good English scholars, we reviewed the various departments and found much to interest and to admire, particularly the printing press. The charging system was responsible for some little discussion and criticism.

Again our hosts would not permit us to depart without tasting Dutch hospitality. We left the Public Library in several parties: some to visit the Ryks Museum and other Galleries and some to view the various streets and sights of old Amsterdam, all rejoining at lunch. This event was to be followed by a trip on the canals, and once more we were specially honoured. Three steam launches had been provided by the Harbour Master who, in person, directed the excursion and took great pains to point out the various features

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Offers to purchase to be sent to the Secretary, Public Library, Barking, Essex.

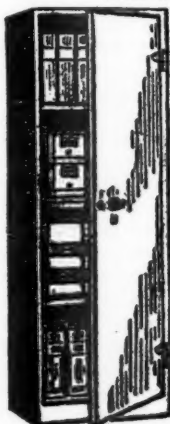
of interest to be observed during our journey through the network of canals and harbour. We were ultimately landed at the "garden-city" of Oostzaan, which, although a suburb of Amsterdam, approached more nearly to our preconceived ideas of a Dutch town, so far as the older portion was concerned. The newer, or garden-city, reminded us of similar experiments in England, such as at Golder's Green and Eltham. The Library is a charming building, one-storied, with thatched roof. Well-lighted and well-arranged, it is admirably suited for its purpose and does good work. Here we were given a Dutch tea, with hard-boiled eggs dyed in various colours, buns, etc. The salt was served in tiny wooden shoes of native design and we gladly accepted the offer to take these away as souvenirs of a happy hour in Oostzaan. On leaving the building we were again waylaid by the ubiquitous photographer and yet another "group" was taken. A pleasant walk through the new village and along a canal brought us to our waiting fleet and we were quickly transported back to Amsterdam. Dinner was held in the extensive winter-garden attached to the hotel, and the beautiful surroundings, together with the attraction of a good band prolonged the agreeable business until nearly 9 o'clock. The next two hours were spent in a stroll round the city, a visit to a cabaret, shopping, etc.

Notwithstanding the late hour of retirement there were many early risers on Sunday morning and when we met at the station at noon we found some had visited churches and others had again viewed the city and its wonderful canals. A long journey by train brought us to Hilversum, accompanied by many of our Dutch friends. Lunch was followed by an inspection of the Public Library, where many things had been displayed for our observation. As an example of the great thoughtfulness of our hosts we noticed they had been to the pains of translating many of the Dutch titles and notices for our benefit. The Chairman of the Committee welcomed us in a very appropriate and witty speech, and then left us to the kind attentions of Miss Muhlenfeld and her staff. One feature which surprised many of our members was the loan of pictures. These consist of reproductions of famous paintings, including a set of the English publication, "Lett's 100 best pictures," which are loaned for any period to any borrower for about 10 c. (2d.) per week. Stock frames are provided, with buttoned backs, so that changes can be readily made. After a welcome cup of tea we entrained for Bussum. This is one of the aristocratic suburbs of Amsterdam and may be likened to Richmond or Wimbledon. The library is particularly well-planned, the issue-counter being slightly raised and having full control of the entire interior, as well as of the entrance. In many respects

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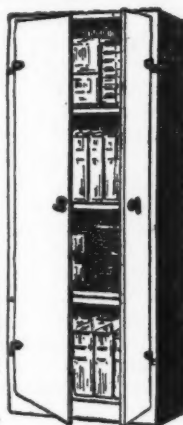
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this is one of the finest libraries, for its size, we have been fortunate enough to see, and reflects very great credit on the Librarian (Miss Guerber) and all concerned. More hospitality! a vote of thanks, and then an adjournment to the station to meet the train for Amsterdam. After dinner we received an invitation from our worthy host to visit an "Advertising Exhibition" in the city, in which he is interested, and found it thoroughly enjoyable. On entering we were greeted with the strain of our own National Anthem. Various industries were represented by stalls and amongst the exhibits were such as we are accustomed to see at Olympia, in London. Among the more noteworthy were the printing of etchings, and the manipulation of colour-schemes in electric-light advertising. Much time might have been spent here with pleasure and advantage, but there was still much to do, and we returned to the hotel for a "business meeting." This took the form of a discussion of what we had seen at the Libraries visited, a comparison of their methods with English work, and a talk over their peculiar difficulties, which are largely financial. Messrs. Jast, Sayers, Wharton, Ross, Minto, Walton, Drs. ter Meulen and Sevensma, and others contributed, and the meeting continued until midnight. Then to bed, tired and happy.

The morning broke upon our last day in Holland, and a busy day it was to be. Assembling at the station at 10.30, we were soon on our way to Dordrecht, *via* Haarlem, Leyden and Rotterdam. Now was the chance to see the famous bulb-fields of Holland, and a glorious sight they were. Like huge Indian carpets spread across the landscape, squares of vivid colour, presented a picture not soon to be forgotten. Dordrecht was reached about noon and there we found another party of new friends to greet us and to show us some of the beauties of the famous city they all take pride in. The canals in Dordrecht are unlike those of Amsterdam and approximate more nearly to one's idea of Venice; probably in the summer months the comparison is still more appropriate. Our first visit was to the Church, a magnificent building of the 13th century, fitted with a very fine organ, which we were privileged to hear. Owing to the absence of colour the interior struck us as somewhat plain, a contrast to English cathedrals. Unfortunately we dare not linger, for Miss Snouck Hurgronje was awaiting us at the Public Library, and we were already late. So late indeed, that it seemed as if "good-bye" was said in the same breath as "good morning" and we were no sooner there than we had to leave! I hope our friends at Dordrecht will not think us unkind or ungrateful, for they had made extensive plans for our comfort and pleasure, which were treated as naught. The fault was not really ours: the programme was so full that it was impossible to do justice to it. All agreed

that days instead of minutes might have been well spent in Dordrecht and expressed the hope that on some future occasion this charming town might be the centre of a similar excursion. But we must get on: through the old town-gate to the quay where we find the steamer for Rotterdam to accommodate us. Our friends had not forgotten the inner man! Lunch was handed round in the open air and thoroughly enjoyed under these novel conditions. The trip through the canal and down the River Maas was exceedingly pleasing and the slight shower we passed through (the first during the holiday) was quite ignored.

(To be concluded.)

THE PRINTING PRESS: ITS PLACE IN LIBRARIANSHIP.

By M. L. HODGES, *Librarian, Hanwell Public Library.*

(Continued from page 71.)

The essential features of a hand press are :—

1. A bed upon which is placed the forme ;
2. A kind of flap called a " tympan," which hinges on to the bed, and on which is placed the paper ; the tympan is folded down so that the paper rests on the type.
3. A flat surface called a " platen," above and parallel with the bed of the press.

When the paper is being placed on the tympan, the bed, the forme, and, of course, the tympan itself, are all out from under the platen. When the tympan is brought down so that the paper rests on the inked type, the whole is run underneath the platen. By pulling across a lever, the platen descends on to the top of the tympan with enough pressure to cause an impression.

In actual practice, the several operations in printing at a hand press, are :—

(1) Inking the roller ; (2) Inking the forme ; (3) Laying the paper on the tympan ; (4) Folding the tympan down on the forme ; (5) Running in the forme under the platen ; (6) Taking the impression by depressing the platen ; (7) Running out the forme ; (8) Lifting the tympan ; (9) Removing the paper.

There is another operation connected with the " frisket," but it is not necessary to speak of it here.

You will readily understand that these nine separate operations require nine or more separate movements of the hands, and, therefore, the speed of the press is not great. Two men working together cannot get more than about 250 copies an hour. However, speed is of no great importance to the amateur.

Between the time that one pulls off the first proof, and the time one starts printing the actual copies, there is still a good deal of work

to be done. The printer must read through his proof for mistakes. It is here that his skill as a compositor will be tested. A defaced letter, of course, is only a matter of substituting a good letter, which will occupy the same space as the bad letter. But a word or letter omitted, or a word or letter to be deleted, in short, anything that has to be inserted in, or taken out of, a line of type which is tight from end to end, and must be tight from end to end, is going to cause a lot of trouble. The insertion of but one letter will, perhaps, merely entail lessening the spaces between the words in that line. But the insertion of a word would mean taking out the last word of the line and inserting it in the next line, but not before having made room for it by taking out the last word of the next line. This process would have to be continued line after line until you came to the end of a paragraph where the last line had sufficient "white" in it to allow you to make room for the displaced word of the line before. Let us assume that corrections have been made, and that the last proof is quite "clean." We must now look at the impression. If it is too heavy or too light we rectify by adjusting a screw at the top of the press. Again, we may be using different sizes of types on the job, and although in theory all types are supposed to be of the same height, yet this is not so actually. Again, some of the type may be worn. In short, for various reasons, the proof shows that some portion of the type is lower than the rest. This portion must be raised by pasting paper on its underside. By this process, known as "underlaying," we can bring it up to print as it should. "Overlaying" is a similar process, and consists of pasting pieces of paper on the tympan in order to make the impression heavier in some places than in others. "Underlaying" is the basis of good "making ready," as all this business is called, but is more bother because you have to lift the forme every time.

We will suppose that the impression is perfect. We must now get a correct "lay," so that when we feed in the sheet of paper the impression will appear on the surface in the position we want it, that is, the top, bottom and sides of the text parallel with the top, bottom and sides of the paper. This can be done by taking a very light impression on the tympan, measuring where the edges of the paper should be, so as to leave the proper amount of margin, and then sticking in pins, to which the sheets of paper are laid. This, in an elementary way, describes the process of "making register," and as soon as it is done you can start printing.

Again, I am obliged to omit certain details such as the correct inking of the forme; the importance of getting a good "colour"; etc.

I should like at this stage to consider in what way a printing press could be used in librarianship. That consideration can be divided into three parts, namely:—

(1) Printing done officially in the library; (2) Printing done unofficially by enthusiastic members of the staff; (3) Printing done by a printing section of our Association.

It is easy to imagine the work that could be done by a press used officially in a library. Almost every form of application could be printed, including the usual notices, up to a certain size. But apart from these obvious items there is a large amount of material waiting to be printed that is not printed now, either because of the present high cost of printing, or because even in normal times it would be impossible to induce many committees to have it printed. This material can be divided into two parts :—

(a) The printing of bulletins ; lists of additions ; lists of books on topical subjects ; in short, that side of library work which provides the readers with a key to the library stock.

(b) The putting into printed form of some of those ideas that illuminate the mind of the enthusiastic assistant and which, as often as not, leave the Chief unappreciative, very often because he knows that adequate publicity is necessary, and the typewritten form looks cheap and lacks the dignity and power of attracting attention that is one of the qualities of printed matter. I refer to such "stunts," for instance, as printing notices to be pasted in a lending library book, calling attention to the fact that works on the same subject can be seen in the Reference Library ; a similar notice could be placed inside the covers containing technical journals in the Reading Rooms. In this way the lending library book would advertise the Reference Library, and the periodical cover would advertise both Lending and Reference Libraries. Then lectures could be advertised by printing handbills—a method particularly useful where the auditors are particularly strict. Lectures and anything else could be advertised by printing announcements on slips the size of charging cards, and inserting them in the book pockets. Again, announcements could be printed and issued in the form of bookmarks. All these little labels and notices would be so many bits of publicity, and publicity being, as someone said, the father of popularity, and popularity being essential to a public library, the library could not fail to benefit.

This class of printing would come under the head of what is known as "small job printing," and a good many of the jobs that could be done officially could also be done unofficially.

But apart from "small job printing," the possession of a printing press would open the gates to a field of activity of great importance. In every borough, urban district, or other district, there is a vast amount of material relating to local history waiting to be put into printed form. There are also many facts of local history, already printed, about which more has come to light, perhaps in articles to local newspapers, or in manuscript form, or discovered in conversation with the oldest inhabitant. Useful work would be performed by printing the most important in the form of monographs. To quote Mr. Benson Thorne again, he said in his address broadcast on January 30th, "the despised leaflet of to-day regarding a local event may easily prove a prized possession in fifty year's time." I

think that a series of monographs on local history issued by the public library could not fail to enhance the value of the library and to raise its reputation in the locality.

There is another field of activity open to the operation of a printing press in librarianship. Why could not a printing section of our Association be formed. Apart from doing a certain amount of job work, there is a very important branch of librarianship which it could undertake. I refer to the production of bibliographies. From a commercial point of view such work is no doubt unprofitable. But from the point of view of utility we are all agreed upon its value. Other work that could be undertaken by the printing section would be the production of reprints of examples of English literature, or the printing of those that at present exist in manuscript form only. The printing section could print monographs on professional subjects. All this, of course, would require very careful organisation, a point which I have considered, but cannot go into now.

From my description of the hand press you are no doubt reserving your opinion. A small hand press, even with only one fount of large size type would perform far more efficient work than the rubber printing sets to be found in almost every library. These latter are generally used by an assistant who takes one letter at a time, stamps it on the paper in purple or black ink, puts it back, takes another, and so on. When he has finished but one copy is the result. As a rule it is inked in afterwards with ordinary writing ink. If rubber stamps are not used, then we employ stencils. In both cases a lot of time is spent and only one copy is produced. Almost every public library could afford to purchase a hand press and three or four founts of large types. These types, by their size, would be easy to set up, lock up, and place on the bed of the press, ink, and pull off, not one, but as many copies as required.

Although you may agree with what I have just said about a hand press being used for notices, you are no doubt very dubious about the ordinary assistant, quite uninterested in printing, being capable of assisting in producing lists of additions, monographs, etc. You will say that only a printing enthusiast would take the trouble to attain such skill in composition as to enable him to set up type quick enough to keep pace with the monthly additions alone. You will say that if the printing were done officially it could only be done during slack periods and without interference with the usual work of the library. If ordinary printer's cases must be used, and all the fuss and bother of "making ready" be gone through, only a whole-time printing assistant could do the work. But for the invention of the Ashlock press and its patent type-setter, I should have hesitated to suggest the contrary. This machine has been invented for the non-professional printer. It is a compact and complete office printing press, and literally requires no previous knowledge of printing to operate it. It prints from ordinary printer's type, from line blocks,

or from stereos. It will even print half-tone blocks, though, of course, the results cannot compare with those of the professional process worker. What is particularly striking about the press is how its inventor has stepped into the amateur's shoes and thought of every difficulty, finding a solution to each, and rendering a long apprenticeship totally unnecessary to produce good work.

The patent typesetter enables you to set up type as easily as we put books on shelves. It is a frame-work, divided into channels, one or more channels being allocated to a letter of the alphabet, to figures, points, etc. The "lay" is that of the alphabet, running from A to Z. That gets rid of the first difficulty. The figures follow after, and the other "sorts" at the extreme right. Imagine these keys to be the keys of a typewriter. Depress one, and a type protrudes and rests between your thumb and first finger. The face is always first, and the nick always to the left. So there is no bother of looking to see if it is the right way up or not. You take the type out and put it in this patent "stick." Now, this "stick" has a false bottom, and when you have completed a line, place it in the chase against the top side, with this release lever on the left. Press the lever, which removes the false bottom; lift the stick upwards and the types are left on the bed of the chase. Place a brass reglet against the line just set up so as to prevent it from falling down, and then proceed to justify the line, that is, fill it out. Here you have two more difficulties rendered like child's play—justifying and emptying the "stick." You proceed to set up and empty other lines in the same manner, and when you have completed your matter, fill up any spare space with furniture. The difficulty of "locking up" becomes the simple operation of screwing up these thumb screws. Push down any type which stands higher than the others by planing down with an ordinary "planer" or with the rolling pin. You have now a forme ready to print. You will notice that the "bed" of the ordinary printing press is here a fixed part of the chase, and all you have to do now is to insert it in the press—like dropping a picture into a frame.

To ink the type, raise this handle, and push it up as far as it will go. This raises the inking roller which inks the type. As soon as the inking roller gets to the top, it is automatically put out of action and an impression roller, which is really the platen of the ordinary printing press, is brought into action. You insert a sheet of paper into the paper clips, and, pulling down the handle, the impression roller presses the paper on to the inked types, and when it reaches the bottom you withdraw the paper and find it a printed sheet. If the pressure is too heavy or too light, you adjust it by thumb screws underneath the chase. If the ink is too heavy or too light, you reduce or increase by adjusting thumb screws at the back of the ink-duct. The press, of course, is entirely self-inking, and the distribution is as regular as that of an ordinary printing machine. Cards can be printed to within

five-sixteenths of an inch from the top edge, by the special card attachment supplied with the press.

Immediately you have finished printing, and before distributing the type, you clean off the ink by pouring cleaning solution on to a felt pad, which you place on the type and run the rolling pin over in different directions until the type is clean.

Distributing the type, an operation that is usually greatly disliked in printing offices, becomes as easy with the patent typesetter as setting up type. One side of the chase is moveable, that is, it slides back so as to leave sufficient space to allow the top line of type to slide freely from the chase into the distributor. The distributor is then attached to the side of the typesetter, and the type is distributed in the same way as it is set up—by depressing a key, taking the protruding type between the thumb and finger of the right hand, passing it to the left and inserting it in its proper channel. You can distribute the type without even looking at it, for it comes out as you set it up, with the nicks to the left. You merely read what you have just printed, and spell to yourself “D-e-p-t-f-o-r-d-space-P-u-b-l-i-c-space, etc.

The speed of this press is 500 copies an hour; its type area is 7½-in. by 5½-in., and it takes sheets up to 10-in. by 8-in. Messrs. Ashlock are putting another and larger machine on the market, which will take sheets up to foolscap folio. This is a rotary press with an automatic feed, and will print at the rate of 2,500 copies an hour.

Messrs. Ashlock do not claim that it will produce work equal to that of a first-class printer. They call it what it is: an office printer. But they do claim, and I think their claim is justified, that it will produce work superior to that of many ordinary jobbing printers, and when one considers the difficulties of ordinary printing, and then that this press can be used efficiently by a boy or girl, you will agree that it is a remarkable achievement. With a press like this a public library could do almost all its own printing. Stock jobs could be done by having stereotype blocks made, and using them when wanted. A library buying one of these presses would have to decide on the type in which the bulk of its printing would be done, and order a sufficient quantity, reserving the typesetter for that type only. Other founts of type, less frequently used, could be kept in ordinary cases, unless more typesetters were bought.

Messrs. Ashlock's showrooms are at 57, Carter Lane, E.C. 4. (One minute from St. Paul's Cathedral).

NEW MEMBERS.

W. John A. Hahn (Camberwell); Thomas V. Roberts (Twickenham); Elsie A. Russ (Bath); Emily Skinner (Newport).

N.W. Division: Gladys Gregson (Heywood); Hettie May Parker, E. Gladys Godwin (Mechanic's Institute, Crewe); Ivy Hill (Newton-in-Makerfield); **Associates:** Misses Heaps and Miles (Waterloo).

N.E. Division: Associate: Miss Pearson (Gateshead).

THE DIVISIONS.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH.

At the Everton Branch Library, Liverpool, on March 21st, Mr. C. Bushell (Librarian-in-charge), initiated a discussion of "The 'Teens' Question." Referring to the attitude of adult readers towards the more youthful frequenters of public libraries, Mr. Bushell admitted that there were cranks who resented the presence of young people in the adult department, and that some parents might object to their sons and daughters having unrestricted access to the full range of adult books. He thought, however, that these contentions were unworthy of serious consideration. In the first place, it was beneficial to young people to be allowed to associate with older readers, and, secondly, as persons over fourteen years of age were entitled to enter theatres and music halls unattended, it was absurd to assume that their morals would be corrupted by the carefully selected books with which public libraries were stocked. As regards the financial aspect of establishing separate departments, Mr. Bushell maintained that libraries could not afford the inevitable duplication of stocks. Far more was already being done for adolescents than Mr. Thorne (in his paper read at the Central Library for Students last year) seemed to imply. The comparatively small number of people using the public library was not the fault of the library authorities, but was due to the fact that people were too busy knitting jumpers, cultivating allotments, playing tennis, etc., to have either the time or the inclination for study. And this state of mental inertia also afflicted the youth of the nation. Concluding, Mr. Bushell said that while much remained to be done, he did not consider that the solution of the problem lay in the provision of separate departments.

Mr. R. Cochran (Librarian-in-charge, Walton and Fazakerley), held different views. The importance of adolescence, he said, was recognised by educationalists (both religious and secular) and by social workers generally. It was the most impressionable period of life. Employers of labour, taking the same view, were providing educational and cultural facilities for the young people employed at factories and workshops. Little had been done by Public Libraries to cater in any special way for the adolescent. At present a child on reaching the age of 14 became eligible for membership of the adult library. Twenty-four hours after he had ceased to be (under our present system) a juvenile, he was at liberty to obtain any book from the adult department. There was a grave danger in this unrestricted issue of books to young people. The transition from one section to the other was too rapid. The remedy seemed to lie in the provision of a carefully selected collection for the exclusive use of readers between 14 and 18 years of age. Extra stock would not be required: it would simply mean re-distribution. Extra copies of suitable fiction and of certain non-fiction works could be transferred from the adult section, and many other books, which were not duplicated, would render better service if so arranged. If the principle were admitted that adolescence was the most important period of life, the need for special treatment became obvious. The ideal of librarianship in regard to young people was not so much to create readers as to develop the habit of reading the best literature.

The discussion was taken up by Miss K. Fearnside (Librarian, Waterloo-with-Seaforth Public Libraries), who deprecated the provision of separate departments, and considered that much could be done towards solving the problem of the adolescent reader by a little judicious help in the choice of books on the part of the librarian or assistants. Mr. James Carr (Reference Library, Liverpool), spoke of the activities of industrial welfare workers in regard to the provision of suitable literature.

Mr. J. T. Evans (Reference Library, Liverpool), contributed a short paper on "The Possibilities of Wireless in the Educational Work of Public Libraries," with special reference to the needs of the Everton Branch Library, where a Wireless Set had recently been introduced. He referred to the difficult task the broadcasting stations had in trying to please all classes of "listeners-in," and stated that Mr. G. T. Shaw, chief librarian of Liverpool, was in communication with the Manchester Broadcasting Station with a view

to the provision of suitable programmes for children, and it was hoped that before long the Marconiphone set recently presented to the Everton Branch Library by Councillor F. C. Bowring could be put to satisfactory use. It was worthy of note, he said, that the first set to be installed in the Liverpool Public Libraries was in a branch situated in a locality where the children would have less opportunity of "listening-in" at home. Through the generosity of Councillor H. E. Cole, a similar set would soon be installed in the Children's Department of the Toxteth Branch Library, and no doubt if the venture proved a success, the desirability of making wireless a recognised feature of all the Liverpool branch libraries would receive consideration.

During the course of the evening, members had an opportunity of "listening-in."

J. T. EVANS, *Hon. Secretary.*

MIDLAND DIVISION.

On March 20th last, a meeting of the Division was held at the Reference Library, Birmingham, by kind permission of the Chief Librarian, Walter Powell, Esq. The meeting took the form of a Literary Evening, the subject being "The Modern Irish Literary Revival." Members were present representing, besides Birmingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

Prior to the reading of the papers, a short business meeting was held, Mr. H. Woodbine being in the chair. It was reported that 60 members are now attending the educational classes which are held under the auspices of the Division in the following subjects: Literary History, Cataloguing, Library Routine and the subjects required for the Preliminary Test.

A letter was read from Mr. Barry Jackson on the subject of the proposed closing of the Repertory Theatre, expressing his pleasure in the interest shown by the Division in the Theatre. He stated that it was proposed to re-open the Theatre for a season of twelve weeks from September 27th to December 20th.

The death in February last of Miss N. Underhill, of Leamington, was reported. A vote of sympathy with her relatives was passed, members meanwhile standing in silence. The secretary was desired to convey the expression of sympathy to the late Miss Underhill's relatives.

The business being concluded, Miss E. Brain, of Coventry, read a paper on W. B. Yeats, in which she gave a résumé of the poet's life and work, illustrated by readings from the poems. Miss E. D. Maddocks, of Wolverhampton, followed with an interesting paper on Lady Gregory, particularly her activities in connection with the founding of the Irish Literary Theatre, afterwards the Abbey Theatre Company. A paper was then read by Mr. C. H. Bird, of Birmingham, who spoke on George Moore, chiefly as revealed in "Hail and Farewell"—the "indispensable glossary" of the movement.

The dramatic work of J. M. Synge was then dealt with by Mr. H. Sargeant, of Birmingham. The speaker gave a sympathetic sketch of the work and tragic life of this playwright, who comes nearest to revealing the soul of the Irish peasant. Miss Edith Weston, of Birmingham, in her General Survey of the Irish Literary Revival, criticised the oft-quoted statement that the Revival began with and returned to Yeats, supporting her view by a sketch of Irish Literature from Mangan to the present day, by which she showed that the Irish Literary Revival had, in true Irish fashion, really not taken place at all. If it had done so, it was not the work of a coterie in Dublin, but was simply the recognition by English people that Ireland had a literature of her own.

An interesting discussion, in which Messrs. Creed, of Coventry, Cashmore, Woodbine and Williams, of Birmingham, Miss V. B. Weston, of Birmingham, and many others took part, followed the reading of the papers. The possibilities and tendencies of the Revival were freely discussed as well as the thorny question as to how far its protagonists were Irish before they were artists.

The meeting concluded with an informal discussion of the next Dance, which is to be held on April 23rd, at Queen's College. It is expected that as many members as possible will appear in fancy costume.

A. R. W.